



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **DPNR CELEBRATES COASTWEEKS WITH BEACH CLEANUP**

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources announces that the division of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) is celebrating Coast-weeks International Coastal Cleanup, also known as COASTWEEKS.

COASTWEEKS is a nationwide effort coordinated by **THE OCEAN CONSERVANCY** that has been happening for the past 30 years in the U.S. Virgin Islands with the help of many community partners.

“Removal of debris is important to maintaining the vibrancy and aesthetic quality of our ecosystems. Collecting data during cleanups is also an important process that ensures we capture vital information such as the types, quantities, and weight of debris removed,” said Commissioner Oriol. “Without this data, removal of the debris on its own will not prevent and reduce debris from ending up on our coastlines,” concluded Oriol.

CZM has selected **Fortuna Beach** on St. Thomas for clean-up and is requesting the help of the community. Volunteers and students for community service are needed to help clean this beach on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 11 a.m. Supplies such as gloves and bags will be provided.

If you have a group and want to participate in this program by cleaning up **Fortuna Beach** or any other beach, please contact Zola Roper, Marine Debris Coordinator at (340) 774-3320 [zola.roper@dpr.vi.gov](mailto:zola.roper@dpr.vi.gov).